



PLANNING A REUNION IN COLUMBUS? FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO SUCCESS!

Planning a fun and memorable family reunion can be a challenge no matter the size. Follow these ten steps to ensure your Columbus reunion is a successful one.

Step 1: Make a Plan

Start by selecting a date and location. Creating a questionnaire or survey for family members with date options is a great way to receive input on what will work best for the majority of relatives. Remember: you can't please everyone.

Step 2: Recruit a Planning Committee

No one can single-handedly plan a reunion, so it's important to recruit helpers. But, choose wisely. Recruit family members who are capable of their assigned tasks and are excited to contribute. These are the roles and responsibilities we suggest:

Chairperson: oversees the event; handles communication between committee members and coordinates onsite volunteers

Secretary: researches and collects family member contact information; sends out event details

Treasurer: handles the reunion checking account; maintains the budget; makes purchases

Lodging Liaison: responsible for selecting the hotel and negotiating a group rate; works with Experience Columbus staff to gather room rates

Food Director: works with the caterers; handles meals for potlucks and banquets

Entertainment Director: organizes activities for a variety of ages; reaches out to Experience Columbus for recommendations on local attractions and events

Welcome Committee: makes name tags, agendas, signage and decorations; works registration; helps family members mingle

Step 3: Establish a Theme

Make sure the event is fun and memorable by creating a theme. Get assistance from the planning committee and think outside the box! A few ideas to consider:

Olympic Reunion: plan activities, outfits, food and decoration around the Summer Olympic Festivities.

Celebrating our Family Roots: go back in time to showcase your family's ancestry. Inform participants ahead of time to compile photos, mementos and stories that can be contributed to rebuilding the family tree and celebrating your lineage.

Hawaiian Luau: perfect for summer reunion held poolside! Serve island-inspired food, wear tropical clothing and plan outdoor activities like hula dancing.

Decades of fun: bring back music of the past with events that celebrate the hits of the 50s, 60s or 70s.

Made in Cbus: stop by Homage for local swag. Showcase all that makes our city great by incorporating local goods. Have a local band perform at the evening function. Serve drinks made with local spirits or host a Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams party.

Step 4: Create a Budget

Cost is a big driver of attendance. Keep costs down or try to give family members ample time to budget. It's a good idea to note the anticipated cost as soon as possible, as early as the initial save-the-date notice.

Step 5: Offer Activities for Everyone

You're in luck because Columbus has something for every family member with a wide variety of attractions, activities and events for all ages.

For the entire family: The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Columbus Metro Parks, Columbus Crew SC (major league soccer affiliate), Columbus Clippers (Triple-A affiliate of the Cleveland Indians), The Scioto Mile, any one of our summer festivals including Asian Festival, Jazz & Rib Fest, Dublin Irish Festival.

For kids: COSI, Zoombezi Bay Waterpark, Columbus Commons

For Teenagers: Grand Prix Karting, Segaway Tours, Easton Town Center, Polaris Fashion Place, Short North Arts District, The Chamber Escape Room

For Adults: Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio History Center

Step 6: Have a Plan B

If parts of the reunion are being held outdoors, reserve a pavilion or shelter house that can accommodate all attendees in case of unexpected weather. Be prepared with alternative indoor activities for your group. Contact Experience Columbus for additional recommendations.

Step 7: Spread the Word

Send invitations as early as possible and use mailings as a chance to gain excitement for the reunion. Invitation may vary from a simple flyer or postcard to a more elaborate newsletter. Email or Facebook invitations also are cost effective options.

Step 8: Kick it off with Excitement

Getting every attendee involved as soon as they arrive is critical to establishing a fun and successful event.

Have the welcome committee in place to greet arriving guests. Set up welcome banners and decorations that showcase the reunion theme. Provide agendas with activities to ensure no one is left out of the fun. Contact Experience Columbus for welcome bag supplies and souvenirs for attendees.

Step 9: Capture the Moment

Your reunion will begin and end before you know it, so be sure to capture all those special moments! Hire a photographer to snap an image of the entire family or make a video diary with footage and attendee interviews.

Hashtags to follow and post with:

[#cbusfoodscene](#) | [#expcols](#) | [#asseenincolombus](#) | [#lifeincbus](#) | [#shortnorth](#) | [#artmakescbus](#)

Step 10: Follow Up

Afterward, make it a point to stay in touch. Family newsletters and social media invite groups are great options to accomplish this. Send out an evaluation form to all attendees to collect feedback and ideas for your next reunion.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

